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XXVII

BULGARIA AND YUGOSLAVIA

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Introduction

B-Y 727 648 BULGARIA and Yugoslavia emerged from the war of 1914-1918 in contrasting positions—the one a defeated power and the other a victor. This situation, a repetition of that following the Second Balkan War only six years before, helped to perpetuate a feeling of rivalry and bitterness toward each other. Both nations, however, faced serious political and economic problems at home which were far from satisfactorily settled when the war of 1939-1945 caught them up again and threw them once more on opposite sides of the struggle.

Bulgaria[1]

B 727 643 ●668 The military collapse of Bulgaria in September, 1918, was followed shortly afterward on October 4 by the abdication of Tsar Ferdinand and the succession of Boris III. Although the pro-German premier, Radoslavov, had resigned some months before, his successors who signed the armistice were unable to stem the current of discontent and disillusionment caused by wartime suffering and the prospect of a severe peace. Accordingly, in the elections of August, 1919, the leftist Agrarian party won a significant victory under the leadership of Alexander Stambolisky who had gone to jail for three years because of his opposition to entry into the war and, upon his release in 1918, had sought to set up a republic. Of peasant stock, he was the embodiment of the hopes for a new era held by the Bulgarian farmers who constituted nearly 80 per cent of the population. After 000

113 [1] The best studies on contemporary Bulgaria are the following: A. Bulatsel, *Ocherki sotsialno-politicheskoĭ zhizni Bolgarii* (Moscow, 1925); K. Dimitriev, *Bolgariya* (Moscow, [illegible]41); A. Girginov, *Ot voĭnata kŭm mir* (Sofia, 1937); T. Girginov, *Istoricheski razvoĭ na suvremenna Bŭlgariya* (2 v.; Sofia, 1934-1935); N. Iliev, *Boris III, tsar na Bŭlgaritĕ* (Sofia, 1936); A. P. Malinov, *Stranichki ot nashata nova politicheska istoriya* (Sofia, 1938); N. D. Peshkov, *Aleksandŭr Stamboliĭski. Lichnost i idei* (Sofia, 1930); N. Stanev, *Istoriya na nova Bulgariya, 1878-1928* (Sofia, 1929); K. Todorov, *Politička istorija savremene Bugarske* (Belgrad, 1938). Sources in Slavic languages have been supplied by Professor C. E. Black of Princeton University.

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becoming premier in October, 1919, Stambolisky's first task was that of signing the peace terms drawn up by the victorious Allies.

The Treaty of Neuilly, November 27, 1919, reduced Bulgaria to a smaller area than it had held before the First Balkan War of 1912 and imposed new burdens. Bulgaria lost the Aegean coast (Western Thrace) to Greece, southern Dobruja to Romania, and strips of land on the west to Yugoslavia. The army was limited to a total of 20,000. Reparations amounting to $450,000,000 were to be paid in thirty-seven years, beginning in 1921. The existence of Bulgarian minorities in all the neighboring states furnished a basis for revisionism which steadily grew, particularly after the rise of fascism throughout Europe in the thirties.[2] The provision for an exchange of populations with Greece greatly heightened the volume of refugees who streamed into Bulgaria, adding to the political ferment and economic burdens of the country. In these and other ways, the settlement exacerbated conditions under which radicalism throve.

Stambolisky won a commanding position in the parliamentary elections of March, 1920, and proceeded to ride roughshod over both the middle class and conservative parties on the right and the Communists on the left. He instituted a number of reforms, including a land law designed to break up the crown lands and larger estates, the imposition of a heavy income tax, and the establishment of a compulsory labor service which in the first four years of operation secured the equivalent of five million wage days of work for the Ministries of Public Works and Railways. In foreign policy he sought to fulfill the treaties and to effect a reconciliation with Yugoslavia among whose Communist and Agrarian parties his concepts of Slavic federation found support. His dictatorial methods, however, won him enemies on all sides, not least among them being the Macedonians who opposed his policy of rapprochement with Yugoslavia. In June, 1923, he was overthrown by a *coup d'état* organized by a group of intellectuals, led by Professor Tsankov, and the League of Army Reserve Officers, among whom Colonels Velchev and Georgiev were leaders. A few days later Stambolisky was assassinated.

Following the Stambolisky regime, the Tsankov government (1923-26) represented a swing to the right. "Communist" insurrections and violence were suppressed with great severity. The increased activity of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) caused difficulties at home and abroad, although after the assassination of its leader Alexandrov (1924) it was split into two factions under Protoguerov and Mihailov who became bitter rivals. A threat of war with Greece arose, but was averted by the action of the League of Nations. A more conciliatory government

[2] See G. P. Genov, *Bulgaria and the Treaty of Neuilly* (Sofia, 1935).

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642 under Liapchev (1926-31) sought to reduce party strife and international
668 friction. It secured a loan from the League of Nations to help in the settlement of refugees, but seemed powerless to prevent raids upon neighboring states by the IMRO which, after the assassination of Protoguerov in 1928, was dominated by Mihailov who openly defied the Sofia government and virtually reigned supreme in some frontier districts. The elections of June, 1931 brought a shift again to the left. The cabinets of Alexander Malinov and his successor, Nikola Mushanov, both of whom were Democrats representing middle class and intellectual groups, were supported by the Agrarians. This coalition found itself threatened by the rise of the Communist party which nearly captured a majority in the Sofia municipal elections of September, 1932. In the communal elections of November, however, the Agrarians and Democrats won a victory which emboldened them in an attempt to suppress both the Communists and the Macedonians in the following year.

643 Meanwhile Tsar Boris III, had steadily gained in authority and influ-
669 ence. The rapprochement with Italy signalized by the marriage of Boris to the daughter of King Victor Emmanuel III in 1930, and the part played
642 by the Tsar in steps taken toward reconciliation with Yugoslavia and Romania (1933-34) helped to bring him to the fore. Then a series of domestic events enabled the Tsar to make himself a virtual dictator. Colonel Velchev, secretary of the Military League founded in 1930, and Kimon Georgiev, prominent in *Zveno* which was a fascistic civilian organization working for reform and a "strong" government, again helped to stage a *coup d'état*, May, 1934, ousting the Democratic-Agrarian Coalition and making Georgiev premier of a dictatorial government with Velchev as his principal adviser. Parliament was dismissed and political parties dissolved by decree. Vigorous action was taken against IMRO, forcing Mihailov to flee. Most of the promises of the new government, however, and especially the solution of the financial crisis, remained unfulfilled. Velchev's known hostility toward Boris III and his alleged republicanism alienated older army circles which helped to supplant Georgiev by General Zlatev who had the backing of the Tsar. Continued financial mismanagement and a reaction within the army itself to its political activities paved the way for a return to civilian government and the dissolution of the Military League after several of its members, including Velchev, had been convicted of conspiracy. This left Boris III master of the situation, although he proclaimed his intention of restoring constitutional rule.

646 Since the anomolous political situation within the country brought an
666 inevitable reaction against the regime, elections for a new *sobranie* were

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668 Communists, Agrarians, Democrats, and republicans. In the summer the
642 Soviet Union, against whom Bulgaria had not declared war, began to press for the ousting of the Germans and a reversal of the policy pursued since
648 1941. On September 2, a new Bulgarian government, headed by a former secretary of Stambolisky, Konstantin Muraviev, and including former Premier Mušanov, announced the full restoration of democratic freedom and rights, a return to neutrality, and the nullification of the Tripartite Pact. It also dispatched representatives to Cairo to negotiate an armistice with Great Britain and the United States and, on September 8, declared
721 war on Germany. In the meantime, however, Russia, not fully satisfied
642 with the course being pursued, declared war on Bulgaria on September 5. This confusing situation was clarified four days later when Muraviev was succeeded by a new government which had the full support of the "Fatherland Front." It was led by Kimon Georgiev, who was alleged to have experienced a change of heart since his participation in the *coup d'état* of 1934, and included his former colleague, Colonel Velchev.

Before the end of September Russian military forces had moved into the country and were rapidly turning the Bulgarian army, now placed under the command of a Russian General, Tolbukhin, against the fleeing
728 Germans. By the formal armistice terms, signed in Moscow on October 28, 1944, Bulgaria promised to withdraw from all territories occupied in Greece and Yugoslavia, to restore all properties of the United Nations and make reparation for damages, to rid Bulgaria of all pro-Axis organizations, to coöperate in the arrest and trial of war criminals, and to accept an Allied Control Commission which would regulate and supervise the execution of the armistice. Since Russia held a dominant position in the Commission and since Bulgaria was prepared to follow Communist leadership, her lot as an ex-Axis satellite differed little from that of Yugoslavia.

Reconstruction and Peacemaking

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669 Reconstruction in both Yugoslavia and Bulgaria took the form of a revolution led by Communists and was patterned after the policies and practices of the Soviet Union.

The National Front in Yugoslavia

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642 The Tito government, established in Yugoslavia in 1945, promised that
631 it would "comply with the fundamental and general principles of constitutional government" and that it intended to found a democratic, federative state. This was to consist of Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Macedonia. Provisional governments were formed in each of these units in April and May, 1945. While Tito's ter-

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CHAPTER XI

COMMUNISM KNOCKS AT THE DOOR

668 COMMUNISM came in the dead of the night. Dragalevtsy people awoke on September 6, 1944, the morning after Russia had declared war on Bulgaria, to find big posters proclaiming throughout the village such slogans as "Welcome to the Heroic Red Army" or "Long Live Stalin."

The peasants realized in retrospect how well organized everything must have been, for these signs showed that the local Communist sympathizers had been ready for this big event. One or two had fought in the mountains against the Germans as Bulgarian Partisans and had been schooled in the part they were to play when the Germans were finally driven out.

668 On September 16, 1944, at least eighty villagers from Dragalevtsy
648 had gone to Sofia to welcome the Russians. Traditions live long in
18c Dragalevtsy, and especially the tradition of brotherly Russia and its overwhelming contribution in emancipating Bulgaria from the Turks in 1878. So this demonstration of admiration for the Russians was genuine and spontaneous. Many parents took their children along so the youngsters could describe to their children and their children's children the excitement and greatness of this day. And the spectacle was one that was memorable, not like the arrival of the Nazis for whom there had been admiration mixed with fear, but rather the arrival of brother Slavs who would help Bulgaria grow great and strong. Thus the peasants had thought.

But news travels fast in Bulgaria and usually becomes altered in the traveling. Within five days, the people of Dragalevtsy heard so many rumors about the Russians that they soon had become afraid. They were especially nonplussed by the Russians' disregard for property. They heard about a man from another village who had been

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hauling corn in his oxcart. Russian soldiers told him to stop, get out, and give them the oxen, the cart, and the corn. He insisted that they must pay him, at which they laughed. Stubborn as only a *Shop* peasant can be, he sat rigidly in his cart to protect his own. From this point on versions differed: some said he was pulled out and beaten, others that he was shot and left dead by the roadside. And always the tale ended with, "The Germans always paid us, but the Russians never did."

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But the Communists offered an explanation for the differences in the behavior of the two armies. The Russians invaded in battle order, which necessitated eating off the land on a catch-as-catch-can basis. The Germans, on the other hand, had sent large staffs ahead to make preparations for the coming of their troops. The net effect upon the peasant mentality was radically different, since property rights seemed violated by the Russians and respected by the Nazis.

Eventually a detachment of Russians had been established around Dragalevtsy. They frequented the taverns so constantly and with such enthusiasm that the peasants had a new saying: "There's nothing worse than drunken Russians." They began to judge the Russian nation by the off-time indulgences of its soldiers.

Although the "great disillusionment" regarding Russian soldiers had begun soon after their arrival, the people still hoped that all would go well politically. Most of the major political parties—the Agrarians, the Zveno, and the Democrats—joined with the Communists in September, 1944, to form a coalition, which they called the Fatherland Front. It was this government that conducted the purge, or the sentencing of about three thousand men and women by the people's courts on the grounds of collaboration with the enemy. About two thousand of these were executed. Some observers now feel, in the light of later developments, that the real basis of selecting victims for trial was not only their complicity with the Germans but also their danger as potential rallying points for a counterrevolution against the Fatherland Front. Two Dragalevtsy young men were tried and executed for collaboration with the Nazis. According to village reports, Communist sympathizers tried to exert pressure upon the new priest in the hope of preventing his officiating at any funeral ceremonies or memorial services for these men. According to the Com-

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[661] munists, they were traitors. The priest still considered them children of God and officiated anyway, although they were not buried in the local cemetery.

[665] 648 By the New Year, 1945, many of the political leaders in the Fatherland Front discerned the handwriting on the wall. The Agrarians and the Democratic party especially recognized the Front for what it was—a Communist screen for actual control. All the while, the Communists—a minority party—had been growing stronger and were nurtured by the Red Army officers who really directed Bulgarian affairs. British and American army officers were represented in the Allied Control Commission which was under arbitrary Russian direction. American and British diplomatic representatives were somewhat more effectual, but only within a rather limited sphere of activity. With the cards stacked in their favor, the Communists controlled the key ministries, chief among them being the Ministry of Interior which had charge of the police and local administration. Therefore, early in 1945 there was a gradual loss of popular enthusiasm for the Fatherland Front, with the real defection coming in May. At that time the leading representatives of the Agrarian and Democratic parties, as well as a section of the Socialist party, withdrew from the Front to form an opposition. In Dragalevtsy, this move met with tremendous support, for there the Agrarian was the major party. The Zveno group, which had engineered the *coup d'état* of 1934 against the king, stayed with the Fatherland Front in which they held the premiership and other prominent positions.

A few former acquaintances of mine had joined the Communist party and were sincerely trying to win their fellow countrymen to their cause. They were inclined to be impatient with those who differed from them, and still felt very much on the defensive. Their condescending attitude toward members of other parties co-operating with them in the Fatherland Front was expressed in a comment making the round: "Oh, these other members of the Front are our water boys.' They'll carry the water to the top of the hill for us and then we'll take it over."

[666] The next political crisis arose in August, 1945. The government had scheduled an election through which it had planned to obtain a

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parliament, whose first duty would have been to approve the previous actions of the government and to give the Front broad powers to continue on its way of reform and reconstruction. Because of the claims by the opposition—those who had withdrawn from the Fatherland Front—that they were not being given a fair chance for representation in the elections, the American and British governments insisted that the elections be postponed and threatened to recognize no government coming into power under the proposed arrangements. The elections were postponed. Most Dragalevtsy people again wholeheartedly approved.

But that was the heyday of the opposition. Those who did not like the way matters were moving put their faith in America and expected her to stop further Communistic consolidation within the country. In the taverns of Dragalevtsy the buzzing must have reminded one of bees in a swarm when the Agrarian leader of the opposition, Georgi M. Dimitrov, sought refuge with the American Political Representative, Maynard B. Barnes, and spent part of the time in Barnes's villa near the Sofia-Dragalevtsy highway, with a handful of American soldiers on guard to protect Dimitrov whose life was endangered. The American authorities assumed some personal risks in sheltering him, and eventually secured his departure from the country. Thus, in the minds of the people as well as in the minds of the Bulgarian authorities, America more and more became identified as the chief support of the opposition and as an enemy of the new state being created. Because lines of antagonism had been drawn so sharply, the peasants of the opposition asked, "When will the war between America and Russia take place?" Those favoring the government asked in an uncertain tone, "Will there be a war between America and Russia?"

News of the atomic bomb gave the opposition increased hope since many of them expected America to use the bomb immediately as a threat in the bargaining and jockeying going on between the Western and Eastern powers.

American popularity rode another high wave when Secretary of State Byrnes sent Mark Ethridge to Bulgaria and Rumania to make a study of the situations in these two countries. Mr. Ethridge, a well known Louisville, Kentucky, newspaperman and a keen student of in-

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649 668 ternational affairs, conducted himself with such astuteness that he became almost a legendary figure in a short time. In fact, he enters this account in an authentic way because he visited Dragalevtsy quite unexpectedly, ate meat balls at the tavern with the peasants, and endeared himself in particular by treating the crowd to two or three rounds of drinks. "Setting up the house" was a practice none too common in the frugal economy that characterized the village. Most of those present spoke quite freely, but two Russian soldiers, definitely ill-at-ease, remained stolidly silent. One old villager did throw caution to the winds and sidled up to tell the distinguished guest, "We are not satisfied, Mr. Ethridge. Don't believe all of the things these young fellows have been telling you." Mr. Ethridge, upon leaving the tavern, was surprised to see Renaissance Square filled with enthusiastic villagers, who cheered him and presented him with many bouquets of flowers.

[666] Later the Secretary of State's special emissary wrote a critical report on the existing Bulgarian government and pointed out what he judged to be its undemocratic features. The American representatives were unable, however, to persuade the Bulgarian authorities to postpone the elections for a second time, so the voting went off as scheduled on November 18, 1945, with the opposition groups abstaining from the balloting.

[687] In spite of these political developments, the peasants in the Agrarian party (the majority in Dragalevtsy) continued to regard Mr. Barnes and Mr. Ethridge in a favorable light. They like to tell stories of the way these Americans supposedly outwitted the Bulgarian authorities. One of these stories, with no foundation in fact, shows how rumors rise in the Balkans. Mr. Ethridge and his small party were said to have visited a concentration camp for political prisoners near Dupnitsa. Since they were planning to visit the historic and beautifully situated Rila Monastery, they obtained permission to stop off en route at this particular camp. According to the peasants' version, when the party arrived they found comparatively few people in the camp; the place was clean, and the prisoners seemed well cared for. That was that; farewells were said and the party moved on to the Monastery. Late in the afternoon, instead of going to the provin-

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cial town of Somokov as originally scheduled, Mr. Ethridge asked his driver when they reached a crossroad to take the fork of the road which circled back past Dupnitsa. Once more at the camp, he asked to be admitted and saw for himself the conditions of overcrowding all too evident when the prisoners who had been sent to the woods for the day were back in their quarters. Without wasting any words Mr. Ethridge merely smiled to the attendants, got back into the automobile, and returned to Sofia.

But stories of camps for political prisoners took my mind back to the 1930's when the government then in power was fearful of Communism and conducted frequent raids upon Communist-operated printing presses. Much doctrinaire literature was seized and the offenders were given heavy prison sentences. A member of an opposition group has never felt very safe in the Balkans. The Zveno group, which has already been mentioned, came into power in 1934 and which still was co-operating with the Fatherland Front, worked out a new wrinkle in the treatment of political prisoners. On March 19, 1935, I wrote in a letter to America:

> Just a little sidelight on political life in Bulgaria. Students who make radical speeches or editors who print little articles opposed to the *status quo* are forcefully invited to leave Sofia for a rest-cure in one of the provincial towns of Bulgaria. They go, for instance, to Karlovo and are "put up" by the government. They are perfectly free with the exception that they must stay in Karlovo, must report to an official at eight each morning, at noon, and must be in their room by eight in the evening, and cannot venture forth until eight the next morning. Such an "invitation" usually holds good for one month, after which the chastened individuals are permitted to return to Sofia, the political cauldron of Bulgaria.

More and more, Balkan governments must be judged not only in terms of the four freedoms which we publicize in America but also in terms of the governments which have preceded them. That is, they must be interpreted, although not justified, in the light of the cultural setting out of which they have sprung.

There was another apocryphal Ethridge story, which illustrated the use of humor as a weapon of the opposition groups to make their life more endurable. The scene was laid around Kyustendil, the chief

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668 fruit-growing area of the country. Mr. Ethridge, in his search for the
687 truth, reputedly approached some of the local inhabitants:

"How are you getting along? Are you satisfied with conditions as they are?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Ethridge. We are quite satisfied, for this is just like Paradise [the Garden of Eden]."

The visitor was jolted a bit to hear so much enthusiasm after the many tales of woe which had been poured out to him elsewhere. "What do you mean? In what way is this like Paradise?"

"Kyustendil is just like Paradise," came the reply, "because we have plenty of apples to eat but no clothes to wear."

669 As time passed, the Communists became more determined to make their position secure. To accomplish this, Bulgarian-born Georgi Dimitrov came down from Russia, where he had once been Secretary of the Comintern, to take over active direction of party strategy. (This Georgi Dimitrov was quite a different person from the Agrarian leader, Georgi M. Dimitrov.) Occasionally peasants would joke about the high board fence around Communist Dimitrov's
[666] yard in Sofia, built to protect him from any would-be assassin. The elections of November 18, 1945, revealed to the leaders of the National Front their relatively weak position. Great numbers of people had abstained from voting, a fact commonly interpreted as a vote for the opposition. Few foreign observers in Sofia actually believed the highly favorable figures which the government claimed in the announced election returns. In the Dragalevtsy district, for instance, thirteen hundred people had been eligible to vote. This number included for the first time all women and all young people 19 years of age and over. It also included the industrialized area, called the Mahala, which lies just below the village on the Sofia road. Approximately 800 votes were cast, of which 200 were against and 600 for the government, or Fatherland Front. Well informed people connected with the Ministry of Interior said that most of the five hundred abstainers had been peasants and that most of the votes cast for the government had come from the industrialized Mahala, which was known as a Communist center. In other words, as one village man succinctly expressed it, "Our people in Dragalevtsy are not for the present government."

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Granting then that a personal sampling of public opinion, conversation with both Communists and Agrarians in the village, and the rough approximation of election returns all added up to a fair statement of the case, Dragalevtsy would definitely be labeled an opposition village. In fact, before I had even revisited the village a number of people in Sofia had told me that I would find this to be the case. Therefore, as I went around among the people and watched the government in action, I asked myself how it happened that a minority could so easily gain control of all effective governmental machinery. The chief secret lay, of course, in capturing the central government in Sofia, which since 1934 had more and more become a dominant influence in the country. But there were other methods adopted by the Communists which, when multiplied in the five thousand villages throughout the land, would explain to some degree why Communism's knock on the door might be said to have turned into a banging. Some of these techniques of political power were proving successful in Dragalevtsy, while others were not.

Effective party work in the villages would normally be guaranteed and to some extent guided by the organs of the state, such as the controlled militia (police) and the hand-picked mayors and secretaries of the communal councils. But even with this provision all was not smooth sailing in Dragalevtsy for the newcomers back in 1945. The difficulties over the mayor would be a case in point.

In September, 1944, the Central Ministry of Interior appointed a young Communist as mayor. Because local public opinion was either indifferent or unfriendly his work was relatively ineffectual. The following July the members of the Agrarian party, which at that time still participated in the Fatherland Front, held a meeting to protest against their present mayor. They went even further and elected a mayor of their own choosing, with the backing of the mayor of Sofia who was well disposed toward their cause. Although this election was not declared legal, the new mayor took over and began to function. His status remained unclarified because the Communists in the Ministry of Interior did not feel sure enough of themselves to force the issue at that time. By December, 1945, the situation had become further complicated since the incumbent mayor lacked the education necessary

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622 668 to qualify for governmental retirement benefits and his former supporters were now a part of the opposition. Sofia, too, had a new mayor. It seemed to the village dignitary that all of his trouble was becoming a labor of love for which he would receive little financial return. Upon last report he was seeking a way out of office and was subject to a great deal of jesting in the taverns. The men all laughed one day in December, 1945, when a visitor from Sofia addressed him as "Mr. Mayor," because nobody knew at that time whether he was the mayor or not.

An office more important, however, than that of the mayor was that of the Commune Secretary. In Dragalevtsy this man was a Communist and, although he did not take the public limelight as much as a regular mayor would, he was the key person in the local government. Communist party matters frequently cleared through him, and he was in position to inform higher authorities about all phases of village government. Whereas the mayor's allegiance was primarily to the people of Dragalevtsy and secondarily to the Agrarian party, a luncheon conversation with the Secretary showed me that his loyalty was first of all to his party. Through serving it he felt he was best serving the people.

668 575 883 178 Part of the secret of Communist control in the local community lay in the success which the Communists had in enlisting the aid of many of the young people. In a traditionalistic society, such as one finds in Dragalevtsy, young people have no place of importance. Prestige is reserved for the old; and wisdom is the prerogative of the aged. Therefore a young person is constantly being urged to conform; and whatever idealism may flare up within him in his late teens becomes dissipated in the face of his placid parents and the other apostles of the past. The Communists showed real insight, therefore, in their glorification of the young people, in giving them a place in the sun, as it were. One of the first things they did was to get control of the *Chitalishte*, or Reading-Room Association, and use that as the core for their young people's program. In the house just back of the *Obshtina* they set up clubrooms where members of the *RMS* (Workers Youth Union) could hold meetings, study up on party doctrines, or loaf. The members of this particular organization, although not

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representing the majority of the young people, had an increasing voice in village affairs and were aggressive in their approach to practical problems. Part of this aggressiveness was directed against the young people at that time still active in the *ZMS* (Agrarian Youth Society), which was a part of the opposition.

Another means by which the Communists gained support was in the favoritism shown to party members in the distribution of rationed articles. Just as the ward boss of an American city or the prewar mayor of Dragalevtsy learned that gratitude prompts support or that favors done call for favors in return, so the Fatherland Front made good use of its opportunities. Some of its generosity served purely political ends. The mayor of Sofia, so the Dragalevtsy peasants said, gave one million leva at Christmas time to the *Septemvriche,* or National Children's Communist Organization. Opposition groups, of course, received no such largesse.

But many of the criticisms of pork-barrel politics were due to misunderstanding. The peasants of Dragalevtsy could usually procure no clothing coupons if they had wool at home, and most of them did have a small supply which they were allowed to keep. This amount was based on family size and any surplus was requisitioned by the government. Artisans and laborers, however, who had no sheep, who worked in factories or at their trade, received the clothing coupons, for that was the only way they had of obtaining wearing apparel. Wool and cotton, thread, and goods were still so scarce in both villages and cities that no one group was content with what it had, and peasants were inclined to ascribe whatever others received as due to favoritism rather than the merits of the case. The proof that wool was scarce was the relative inactivity of the carding and spinning *sedenki,* the working bees so popular among the women.

"Why don't you have *sedenki* now," I asked.

"We have no wool to work," was the plausible answer.

Communist party members who used their political standing for self-aggrandizement and enrichment were supposed to be severely dealt with by the party authorities. One story making the rounds in Dragalevtsy had done much to discredit the Communists with those in the opposition. Since living in a Balkan village is a great deal like

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668 661 687 living in a goldfish bowl, it was not long before the peasants knew that almost a million leva (notice how rounded or approximate the numbers are in such stories) had disappeared from local public funds. There was no official explanation as to its whereabouts, but one Communist had become quite rich and built himself a house better than the village expected of him. Later he was expelled from the party, reputedly because of conversion of funds, but even this action did not restore the funds to the public treasury.

Unquestionably, a loyal supporter of the Fatherland Front was able at times to use his political connections for personal advantage. The peasants would have been surprised if this were not the case, for they philosophically said, "Whoever sticks his fingers in honey is apt to lick them."

207 668 Mention was made in the last chapter of the phenomenal increase in radio ownership since 1937. Now about every third home has a receiving set and is thus in contact with the propaganda line of the government-controlled broadcasting service. Listening to the radio had become a new recreational pattern for many people. Over and over again I asked them what programs they preferred. The men, perhaps because they deemed it the proper answer, often said that they listened to the news. Quite a few were quick to add, "It's nothing but lies though." Many of the women preferred the folk music, and the young people jazz. Long speeches claimed few listeners. The net effect of radio listening then was recreational, with some political influence exerted upon the devotees of the newscast. As yet, the radio had not become a channel for education or raising the standard of living. I wondered, too, just when it would, for the peasants had little hesitation in turning off the set if the program became too serious, and most educational programs under Communist leadership were inclined to be serious.

204 668 American and British influence was sufficiently strong to force the Fatherland Front officials to allow an opposition press. Although this press was beset with difficulties in 1945, it nevertheless became a vehement, at times vitriolic, critic of the regime in power. It took a strong pro-American, pro-British complexion, though never out-and-out anti-Russian. A good check on Agrarian claims of majority sup-

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port was the unquestioned popularity in Dragalevtsy of the *Green Banner*, the newspaper published by the opposition Agrarian group. As long as the opposition press continued to circulate throughout the country, the tried and trusted technique of one-sided interpretation could not be brought into full play. Schoolbooks could be rewritten, pamphleteering could be done in the Communist children's and youth organizations, but these activities were much less effective when other groups could print their versions to serve as antidotes. One-party control, such as the Fatherland Front wanted for Bulgaria, was authoritarian. It preferred to have no alternative opinions presented to the people, and felt that as long as it alone could tell the people what they ought to believe, the people would be well off, for they would be indoctrinated with the truth, as the Communist saw the truth.

Another weapon which the Communists hoped to use as a means of penetration was Pan-Slavism, especially among the Bulgarians. The members of the Red Army, however, instead of being missionaries of this mystic racial dogma, did it the greatest harm. Occupying armies seldom become popular, especially when the mass is held accountable for the sins of the few. The peasants were only too prone to fall into the error of the "lumping fallacy," and condemned all Russians on the basis of a few spectacular events which occurred in the village. One happening which Dragalevtsy peasants used in forming their attitude involved two peasant girls whom I had photographed as children several years before. Now that they were in their late teens they proved unusually attractive to two drunken Russian privates who tried to break into their house late one night. Although a noncommissioned officer came to order them away, these soldiers cursed him and kept on pounding against the door of the living-room. The door held fast, and they finally gave up and went away. Had they but known it, the lock had already been smashed; all they needed to do was to turn the knob and enter a room where the peasant family sat in mortal fear. The father knew that to fight for the honor of his daughters would have meant a bullet from a drunken soldier's pistol; the mother sat in prayer before the crude iconostas, while the girls cried softly at the thought of what seemed to be in store for them. In a village where immorality was frowned upon so strongly, this

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668 attempted assault was an experience which would be told and retold
186 generation after generation, with some such bitter moral at the end as "And those were our brother Slavs."

668 Perhaps the most important technique of control was the effective
626 play upon the fears of the people. Fearful people are a paralyzed people, and it was this creeping paralysis which was beginning to wear down the opposition and make possible Communism's eventual triumph. Sometimes events reached such a climax that fear was turned into action, but matters in December, 1945, were not reaching such a climax. Little by little the people were being made more fearful of the future, especially with the decline of British and American prestige. One never knew when the walls might have ears, or whom one could trust, or when one's home would be invaded and searched. One woman Communist spread a story about a neighbor's hoarding; he was twice arrested and his house searched three times, although the rumor was apparently unfounded. Grudges were sometimes "settled" when one of the parties tipped off the authorities to the failure of the other party to follow some unpopular regulation. Accompanying this fear was the belief that one would not have due protection of the law at a trial, since the new law was being written as cases came up, with little reference to prewar statutes or precedents. One was at the mercy of the court where the all-important question too often had become, "Did you or did you not fight against the Fascist German hordes?" Conceivably in the not-too-distant future the "sixty-four dollar question" might be, "Have you ever been sympathetic to Anglo-American interventionists and reactionaries?"*

When I asked my Communist acquaintances how they justified the interpretation of justice which I have been describing, they flashed back, as though well drilled: "But in America does the Negro or the poor man get justice? Don't the courts serve the interests of the rich? Here in Bulgaria our courts do not serve the interests of the privileged, but rather the good of the masses." I already knew that some of these Communist converts had been motivated by the highest idealism, that they felt they had a remedy for the economic and political evils of their country, and that any means they used to correct those evils would

* An observation made in 1946, which has become only too true in 1948.

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be justified in their opinion. They argued further that all social change was costly, and they firmly believed that the time was ripe for change, their kind of a change.

Many of them felt confident of the future, but some qualified their anticipation by saying, "It all depends upon America and England. If we are left alone, we can work matters out. We want no interference." And as I reviewed the methods by which they attained their present dominant position nationally in the face of hostile opinion in many quarters, I could see that if left alone for a long enough period, they would succeed in instituting the changes they wanted, whatever might be the cost. They controlled the national government and could rely upon Russia for help whenever needed; they were making headway with the young people; they increasingly directed the chief decisions made by village councils and through these councils and secret police knew what was happening throughout the land; they had control over the radio and were biding their time until they could also control the press completely; education was a function of the national government; economic dependence of the peasants upon the local and national authorities was increasing, and there were both tangible and intangible rewards for Communist party membership; fears could be aroused or played down as the government desired, and courts had become not the servant of abstract justice but the instrument of the state.

The time element was of utmost importance. Before the Russian armies left Bulgarian soil upon the conclusion of the peace treaty, the Communists had to have everything well in hand or face the possibility that dissatisfied cliques in the old Bulgarian army could step in to throw the Communists out and set up a military dictatorship which, while anti-Russian, would certainly have few of the earmarks of the democracy known in the West. It would be a recrudescense of irredentist nationalism, and Bulgaria would be on sale to the highest bidder promising to keep the Russian bear at bay. Without the army the Agrarians, who had a realistic, well-thought-out program, would be powerless; but reliance upon the army for a long period would negate most of their plans and make them the bulwark of a dictatorship which they professed to abhor. Such was the unfortunate dilemma

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668 confronting anyone seeking a rational solution to the Balkan impasse back in 1945.

178 578 My visits to Dragalevtsy, however, were not for the purpose of involving myself in the weighty matters of Balkan politics. I simply wanted to see how the village had changed, but soon found that an understanding of political events was necessary to an interpretation of the present situation. This became further apparent when I discovered that the three most significant differences between 1937 and 1945 were heightened factionalism, an increased feeling of insecurity, and a shifting of the relative importance of village institutions. Each of these deserves further explanation.

668 178 578 The coming of Communism had fostered factionalism to a degree never before experienced in Dragalevtsy. That, in fact, was its chief sociological effect. During the times when political parties were flourishing with abandon in the late 1920's and early 1930's the competition between party members was more a recreational pursuit than serious political maneuvering. All parties had had considerable backing from their respective leaders in Sofia, and all to that extent were on a similar footing. With the coming of the Germans some villagers ardently supported Nazi ideology and considered Bulgaria fortunate to be allied with the Axis powers; others had their misgivings, but never to the point of splitting up the village on factional lines. Upon the formation of the opposition in 1945, matters were different. No longer was the political competition an internal affair alone, but was one in which outside powers took an active interest. The Communists openly boasted about the might of Russia and spoke with assurance of Russian support; those in the opposition took what comfort they could from British and American actions and speeches but could not claim unqualified aid.

The splitting up of the village into Communists and non-Communists had therefore caused a tear in the total social fabric. For example, children who belonged to the Fatherland Front organization —the *Septemvriche*—received many small favors from the state. Little *Septemvristi* were sent to conferences within Bulgaria and even to Yugoslavia where they performed for their neighbor Slavs. Children who did not belong because their parents disapproved were taunted

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by the others. They answered back, repeating many of the comments heard around the house, comments definitely unfavorable to Communism and its cause. So the bickering reached into the schoolhouse and the playground, and children early became conscious of political differences not of their own making.

With the young people, as already indicated, the division on the basis of political sympathy was even more marked. The Agrarian young people tended to associate with each other, and watched with dismay the active role that the members of the Communist youth group were playing in village life. Some enamoured couples, where each had differing political loyalties, disregarded political barriers in their devotion to each other, but when broaching the question of marriage to the parents often met stern disapproval. A girl's father would say, "I don't want my daughter marrying a Communist" or "You do what you want, but if you marry a Communist never come back to my house."

The controversy over politics extended also to the various "working groups" which had been such a basic part of village life in the past. A woman who was organizing a corn-hoeing group would invite only those whose political interests were similar. She knew that little work would be done in her fields if she got together women who differed over the present government.

At this stage of accommodation, therefore, factionalism was based on political differences and expressed itself in a separatism which seriously affected village life. People who differed politically simply stayed apart; where they had to mingle, such as on a bus, they made the best of it by teasing and horseplay which seemed to be all in fun but which often gave voice to deeply rooted emotions.

Accompanying the disagreements within the agricultural group itself were disagreements between the Agrarians and the artisans. The peasants of the opposition resented intensely the attempt on the part of the government[1] to classify them with "workers," or men who owned little or no land and who depended entirely upon some skill for a livelihood. The peasant in the past had felt superior, or at least claimed to be more favored in social position than the artisan such as the tailor, although envious of the "easy work" that the tailor had to

[1] [The Communist government in 1945 - Analyst]

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668 578 554 178 do. Owing to the Communistic agitation in Dragalevtsy, lines were more sharply drawn between the peasants on the one hand and the artisans on the other. Most of the artisans had learned their trade in Sofia, had been subjected to city influences, and many of them had become acquainted with Communist ideas there before the war. Even Bai Milosh, the village patriarch so frequently mentioned in this account, had a son who had become an ardent Communist. This son was not the one who took over the management of field crops, nor the one responsible for the livestock. Instead he had become a cobbler. He thought of himself as a worker, whereas his brothers thought of themselves as farmers.

668 578 178 [888] Quarreling between the young and old also characterized the factionalism. Although the Agrarian young people opposed the Communists, they were certainly influenced by the actions of their more progressive or radical contemporaries. The older peasants who were opposed to the present regime emphasized time and time again the danger of having young people run the affairs of the land. This displacement of the aged rather than the indifference of Communists to God seemed to be causing the gravest concern to those who had been steeped in the traditional way of life.

668 179 626 But factionalism was not the only pronounced change which I noted. I found everywhere an insecurity which was foreign to the Dragalevtsy I had once known. The opposition supporters could be expected to feel insecure, for they had to face the possibility that Communism would carry the day. But even the Communists who were definitely in the good graces of the party were having many troubled moments. The wife of one Communist was active in the opposition, and when I asked him why he tolerated such political division in his family he simply laughed. I continued to question him: "Aren't you the boss in this family? Why do you let your wife have such independence?"

He then became deadly serious and sought to lead me out of my cloud of ignorance. "You see, it's this way. Suppose the Communists are overthrown. Where would I be then? But if my wife is active in the Agrarian group, she can then speak for me and get me out of trouble."

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But some of the peasants who turned Communists were having their days of religious doubt. They asked quite frequently, "Can we be Communists and still believe in God?" They voluntarily sent their children to the priest's class in religion held in the schoolhouse. "And the Communist children know their lessons better than the children of the opposition," was the opinion of a member of the intelligentsia.

The ideas of many new converts to the Marxist doctrine had been rudely shaken the previous summer at the time of the church processional for rain. The drought had been devastating. Corn was drying up; pastures were turning brown. So a band of villagers, with some Communists who went along for old times' sake, accompanied the priest on a circuit of the fields. The boys carried the church relics and the priest walked faithfully along in his hot, black vestments. No rain came and the Communists thoroughly enjoyed scoffing at those who had started out with such bright hopes. Conditions grew worse and worse, so the religious leaders thought another processional in order. The whole performance was repeated, with Communists along again. This time the priest went up high on the mountainside, so as to include village properties not previously visited. His prayers were efficacious, for a shower which later turned to steady rain burst forth upon the band of villagers, wetting them to the skin before they could return to shelter in the village. The religious people thus had the last word when atheism was discussed.

The prevalent feeling of insecurity included more, however, than beliefs and basic attitudes about religion and politics. It stemmed also from the economic uncertainty which characterized the period. Always lurking in the peasant's consciousness was the fear that his holding, his precious acres, would be collectivized as was done in Russia. It mattered not to him that his farming was inefficiently done or that such inefficiency was no solution for the overpopulation which characterized his land. He wanted no part of a great impersonal *kolkhoz* where in the long run he would become a worker instead of an owner, or where he would work land which he could not call his own. That to him was serfdom; it was not freedom. And discussions of these topics trailed off into many beside-the-point objections, which

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668 178 626 429 829 nevertheless seemed important to the peasant. I recall one such discussion which dealt with the idea of a shortened work-week at the factories. The peasants disapproved of the whole plan and used it as a basis for condemning land collectivization because "We want to be able to work as long as we want without having people tell us that we have to stop working."

Peasants were greatly confused, therefore, over the farm policies to be pursued in the next two or three years. They planned and schemed and talked endlessly about what they should plant, what they should do about their debts, or whether the aged fathers should distribute their land to their sons before they died. But always there was the great unknown of government policy which upset their calculations and kept them insecure.

668 178 596 Another important social change was occuring in the institutional pattern of Dragalevtsy. In earlier chapters we noted how the encroachment of the state was making considerable impact upon the traditional familistic patterns, while economic life was becoming more commercialized and religious activities were declining in importance. The coming of the Communists had begun to weaken the family ties even further, for the Fatherland Front had given votes to all women and had thus attacked the dogma of male supremacy; it had honored the young at the expense of the aged; and it had turned brother against brother as the struggle for control grew more bitter. As the representative of the central government, the Fatherland Front was affecting an even larger area of life than the prewar regime did, especially when its economic regulations and its threat to the hallowed traditional system of landownership.

668 771 178 829 Another disturbing effect was the substitution of Moscow as the center of the universe, for the Communist adherents at least, when formerly Dragalevtsy or perhaps Sofia by courtesy was thought to be the center. These innovations of the present government had done much to prejudice it in the eyes of the people, who made decisions not upon the basic issues which the government was striving to champion, but resisted blindly and perhaps fanatically simply because the new regime spelled the end of their way of life. As they realized this, some of the peasants turned more and more to the church, the institu-

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tion which had kept Bulgarian nationality alive through the centuries and had become the champion of an independent Bulgaria in days gone by. In Dragalevtsy church attendance had increased and more attention was paid to the forms and ceremonies, although fasting was not gaining any in popularity. Nor were the peasants too trustful of Archbishop Stefan, the politically minded head of their church. But they knew that the church and the family served as mutual supports and that if one suffered the other suffered too. Government which was once tolerated as a necessary evil now had become an active menace to be combated whenever possible. The means of struggling against the government were inadequate, but the peasants had patience and said that they would bide their time. But as they bided their time many of them died and were replaced by men and women who had grown up under the tutelage of the Fatherland Front, who had forgotten about the days of village elders, of large family groups, and no longer reverenced out-of-date superstitions or valued quaintness in contrast to that which was modern.

A new Dragalevtsy was thus being born. Change was nothing new to the village, but this time changes were occurring so fast that the old way of life could no longer absorb the impact of strange traits and differing social values. The transition period was proving painful for those who still wanted to live in the past. Whether it held promise for those gazing toward the future depended upon the decisions or indecisions of men sitting around conference tables in countries thousands of miles away.

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000 As soon as I began to understand what was happening in Dragalevtsy I knew that I was in touch with something tremendously important. Here, in a Bulgarian village which I had once known intimately, I was encountering the same peasant reactions which I had found in many parts of Yugoslavia, a country which also was experiencing political and social upheaval. The Yugoslavs had a National Liberation Front under Tito which paralleled Bulgaria's Fatherland Front under Georgi Dimitrov. Throughout Serbia, in Dalmatia, Croatia, and parts of the Vojvodina I heard Yugoslav peasants complaining about their new regime in the same overtones and undertones as did my Dragalevtsy friends.

What was there about the Communist-dominated governments that the peasants did not like? It was not until I had left the Balkans, and was weatherbound in Vienna, that I had time to formulate the reasons. Some of these have already been mentioned in the discussion of postwar changes in Dragalevtsy, but they can be accurately applied to those other areas in the Balkans where landed peasants are the rule.

● 668 423 471 The Communists are aware of the peasant's hunger for more land and have instituted land reforms to bring about a greater mass ownership of the farming areas, on the principle that "the land belongs to those who till it." But in the case of those who have land, even in quantities small enough not to be affected by the reform laws, the governments have given little assurance that the land will remain private property for an indefinite period. Constitutions guarantee this, to be sure, but constitutions mean little to many authoritarian regimes. The greatest insecurity in the rural Balkans today, as previously pointed out in the case of Dragalevtsy, is the ever-present threat that one's land may sooner or later be taken over by the state and operated as a government holding. Part of the Communist policy may be the promotion of this uncertainty on the theory that insecure people are more easily controlled. But when one tampers

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with a relationship as deep-rooted as that of the Balkan peasant to his land, he is also creating the seeds out of which a spontaneous resistance movement could grow. There is little evidence of collectivization at present, but the peasants are not convinced that it is not just around the corner.

Then too, the Balkan peasants, especially in the settled agricultural areas, have not taken kindly to Communism because they characterize it as an urban movement. When seasoned Communists try to converse with peasants about the merits of the Russian system their factory-oriented dialectic falls flat. Nor have they developed an agricultural vocabulary with which to communicate intelligibly with the rural people. The more the Balkan Communists talk, the more the peasants are convinced of the urban orientation of the new government. They consider it anti-Agrarian and anti-peasant. In an attempt to overcome this reserve to their program the Communists organize deputation teams of artisans who spend Sundays out in carefully selected villages helping the peasants repair their wagons, mend their pots and pans, or they even bring along a corps of barbers to cut the villagers' hair. The spirit behind such a move is to have the artisans show by their deeds, "You see, we are your friends. We're all brother Bulgarians [or Yugoslavs, as the case may be]." But it takes more than this to sell such a radical program as Communism to the capitalistic-minded peasant.

The rural villagers elsewhere in the Balkans, as well as in Dragalevtsy, resent the term worker. Newspapers studiously attempt to get the worker ideology accepted by the rural citizens, but the social statuses of the peasant and the worker are such that the government is asking the former to step down a rung, in the peasant's estimation. So Communism is thought to represent a backward rather than a forward move, and is related to the all-important matter of land: the peasant generally possesses it, whereas the worker is usually landless.

Many analyses of the Balkan problems play up rightly the role of the church, whether it be Eastern Orthodox or Roman Catholic, in the peasants' lack of enthusiasm for Communism. Others stress the generations-old nationality antipathies which have some influence. Certainly Pan-Slavism is not paying high dividends in rural areas in

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spite of heroic efforts by Russian ballet and athletic troupes who tour the provinces of all the Balkan lands. Other writers seek to show that modern Communism is merely a fulfillment of the traditional Communism of the zadruga, but they fail to point out that the zadruga was built around the family and land owned by that family, whereas modern Communism is centered around an impersonal state and ideology. To shift their loyalties from the family to such a state or to replace their religion with a new ideology is asking a great deal of the relatively inelastic peasant mass. State loyalties in the past were built upon joining the army and fighting, even to death, when one's country was threatened, but in times of peace one returned to the native village and had as little as possible to do with the national government after that. But the new turn of events in the Balkans seeks to whip up enthusiasm for the government, morning, noon, and night, when all that the peasants ask is "Please leave us alone."

000 The future seems to hold little peace for the landed peasants. Russia is in the Balkans to stay. Granting no American armed intervention, only some great upheaval in the heart of Russia itself could weaken the grip of the present National Front governments to the point that the opposition in the Balkan countries could take over the control. Given enough time, the Communists can coerce compliance and can train up a new generation which would enthusiastically repudiate the past, thereby consolidating the Communist position.

The process will, however, not be one-sided. The peasants of the Balkans will in turn influence Communism and indirectly help fashion a type which, like Chinese Communism, is somewhat different from that imported from the Kremlin. (Since this was originally written, Tito's failure to push the collectivization of the Yugoslav peasants has gotten him into trouble with Moscow.)

Americans then must more and more regard the area as Russian-occupied, a conquest of war, which the Reds will continue to dominate because of their advantageous diplomatic and geographic position. Out of their occupation Russian sympathizers have argued that two decided gains would come: the lessening of the nationality and ethnic differences, which have heretofore been such a fertile field of ex-

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668 on as the Bulgarian Workers' for Communist Party. Until the creation of the Bolshevik state in Russia, which threw its full support [162] behind the Communist organizations all over the world, the number of Bulgarian Communists, in spite of all efforts, never exceeded 5,000—less than 0.1 per cent of the entire population. Aware that parliamentary means could advance them no further, they resorted, under Moscow's guidance, to the only alternative with some probability of success: the forceful overthrow of the constitutional government. Yet, in 1919, 1923 and 1925, when three desparate attempts to seize power were made, the Bulgarian Communists lacked support by either the Red Army from outside, or infiltrated agents from within the government, so that their failure was complete. The only important result of those Communist experiments was that the Bulgarians and their "working class" were enabled to understand clearly the real intentions of Communism 30 years ago.

The preceding remarks seemed necessary in order to substantiate the conclusion that the pre-Communist Bulgarian reality proved to be an awkward ground for any Communist ac- [162] tivity. Even the Bulgarian workers (about 160,000 before the war) who were the primary Communist target did not find any particular appeal in Communist ideology and promises because there were no relevant reasons for dissatisfaction and many reasons for repudiating the Communist alternative. No risk is taken in assuming that, were it not for Bulgaria's invasion by the Red Army and the simultaneously staged Communist coup d'état, of September, 1944, Communism would never have taken hold in Bulgaria.[4]

[4] It is not well known that the Soviet Union declared war on Bulgaria when the latter had broken with Nazi Germany, had reestablished a democratic government, and was waiting for the armistice's signature with the Western Allies, whose attitude, at the time, is still

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105 The Bulgarian case seems particularly apropos for such a study. Unlike Czarist Russia or the countries of Asia, pre-Communist Bulgaria had developed a relatively free and advanced society. Within the framework of a most liberal and democratic constitution, of a social structure without any noticeable class differences and of a predominantly agricultural economy based on independent small landholdings, Bulgaria [162] had produced a social legislation among the most progressive of our time. Native intelligentsia and labor alike represented only about 20 per cent of the population and were nothing more than recent offspring of the nation's backbone—the peasantry—so that no logical conflict of interests had a chance 466 to develop in Bulgaria. Labor, in particular, 461 had attained, as early as the twenties, the status of free labor with all necessary requisites, such as freedom of professional organization, free collective bargaining and impartial settlement of labor disputes, the right to strike, freedom of choosing and changing job, and a firm legal protection, including social security. In fact, by 1924, Bulgaria had incorporated into her domestic legislation all recommendations of the International Labor Office of the League of Nations.[3]

● 668 In such a harmonious environment, Communism could not and did not have any chance of success. Still, Communist attempts to artificially create a "social problem" and exploit it for their own purposes go way back to the turn of the century, when, in 1903, a small group of Lenin's followers split from the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party and formed a radical-revolutionary nucleus, known later

113 [3] For detailed background information and source material, see author's study *Trade Unions and Labor Legislation in Bulgaria (1878-1953)* (New York: Mid-European Studies Center, 1953).

the disaster which followed and which made him then declare that his „policy had gone bankrupt". 665

Just as the despotism of Stambulov brought into being the Socialist party, so the oppressive measures adopted by the Radoslavov, or Liberal party, caused while it was in power during the years 1899/1901, the formation of the Agrarian. The Radoslavov Government unable to raise a foreign loan attempted to introduce anew the tithe in 1900. The country had suffered from a series of bad harvests during the preceding years, and the peasantry was expecting to make up for its losses by the abundant harvest of 1900 when it learnt to its consternation that the government had decided to divest it of the fruits of its labour. Incited by the Opposition parties the peasantry rose in several districts and the Government had recourse to violence in order to crush the outbreaks. The disorders which ensued caused such indignation that the Cabinet had to resign. Having thus taken cognizance of its force, the peasantry started to organise itself under the guidance of certain teachers, like D. Draghiev, Tsanko Bakalov and Zabunov. Despised, exploited, imposed upon by the political parties, which only thought of the peasantry when elections were approaching in order to wrest from them their votes throught the most misleading promises and ensnaring artifices, the peasantry attempted to free itself from this political and economic servitude by creating an organisation which would defend its rights. At first it was in the form of a strictly professional or syndicalist organisation, aiming at the defence of the interests of the rural population, and it did not at all aim at securing office. Their desiderata were: the curtailment of the growing powers of the Crown, retrenchment and economy in all branches of the administration, the disbanding of the army, the creation in its stead of a militia and the relinquishment of Ferdinand's Imperialistic policy. So long as the move- 665 668

ment was in control of Draghiev, a man of the most austere morality, and leading the life of a Christian apostle, the agrarian movement could be regarded as the most hopeful portend in the public life of the country, as it seemed capable of regenerating the body politic by the eventual dominating position which the Agrarian party would have obtained owing to its vast numerical preponderance. Draghiev, and some of those who seconded him, like St. Montchev, were protestants, and lived a life of Spartan simplicity and of exemplary virtue, which enabled Draghiev to exert, owing to the respect and prestige he enjoyed, a strict discipline on his followers. Unfortunately when the world war broke out, the Entente Powers attempted to suborn some of the Agrarian deputies by commissioning them to buy up the wheat supply on their behalf. The cupidity of these peasant deputies having been aroused, it continued to be exploited by the then Radoslavov Government, with the object of enlisting their support. Those among the Agrarians who had had dealings with the Entente agent, Des Closiéres, were threatened with being courtmartialed if they would not agree to support the Government, while if they did not show themselves recalcitrant, they were offered opportunities for participating in profitable speculations. Intimidation and cupidity thus brought about disintegration in the party. The Spartan Draghiev refused to tolerate these manifest infractions of the moral principles and rigorous discipline he had imposed on the party, and finding himself in a minority seceded and established a new party. Though many of the inculpated members offered to make amends, Draghiev was adamant and refused to readmit them to the fold, declaring that after their moral degradation they could no longer represent the Agrarian organisation and that their fall should be judged by the Party Congress at the end of the war.

A party tribunal was in fact set up, and it passed severe sentences on those inculpated. Had the verdicts been upheld, the Agrarian party, cleansed of all tainted elements might have proved a decisive factor in regenerating public life in Bulgaria. Unfortunately Stambuliiski, the former secretary of the party, who had been imprisoned during the war, and who was making capital out of his incarceration by assuming the aureole of a martyr, thought it opportune to make use of his influence to mitigate these sentences in order to gain the support of the incriminated members and of their sympathisers, and oust Draghiev and his adherents from the party. This unhappily was achieved, and the Agrarian party having thrown overboard its moral ballast, rapidly degenerated into an organisation of professional office-seekers and demagogues, who while in office outdid all their predecessors in the committal of excesses and abuses. All right-thinking men in Bulgaria are at one in admitting that the Agrarian regime of Stambuliiski completed the work of demoralisation introduced by Ferdinand, and that the havoc and devastation it has caused are such that the work of moral recuperation now requires superhuman energies if it is to be tackled with some chance of success. When after Stambuliiski's death, Draghiev was approached and invited by the Agrarians to re-organise the party, he blankly refused to have anything further to do with them, declaring in their faces that they were:

"Without Christian and civic consciousness, that they placed above all their personal ambitions, interests and happiness, and that if Stambuliiski was gone, new adventurers were ready to spring up from among their ranks rendering his immixture in their affairs superfluous."

The autocratic regime of Stambulov brought into being in 1890 the Socialist party, the founders of which were Sakuzov and Blagoev. They initiated a spirited campaign

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against the dictatorial methods in vogue at the time, and rallied a large number of intellectuals around them. The doctrine of Karl Marx, however, was not appropriate to Bulgarian conditions owing to the lack of an industrial proletariat. In its absence, the Socialists attempted to recruit adherents from among the State functionaries. The class which showed the greatest proneness to support this movement was the teaching profession which embraced the new doctrine with enthusiasm and became fanatical votaries of this new gospel. These well meaning but uncritical enthusiasts in their zeal to spread their new faith met with the stolid opposition and incredulity of the peasant mass, among whom they lived, and to whom these strange new doctrines appeared more than heretical. In order to make these tenets acceptable to the mass it was thought that the best method was to undermine existing beliefs and traditions, and the teachers thus began sowing the seeds of disintegration instead of working for the awakening and consolidation of the national consciousness. They heaped ridicule and abuse on the Church, the State and such „bourgeois" conceptions as duty and morality, and thereby contributed to arouse the suspicion and hatred of the peasantry for all intellectuals. Even among the urban working classes, the influence of the Socialists was nefarious, for they endeavoured to indoctrinate their supporters with a savage hatred for the bourgeois, denouncing the present order and holding it up to execration as the only obstacle to the realisation of the messianic conditions which were to prevail on the advent of the Socialist State. The adoption of such wild beliefs by an uncritical and uneducated mass had on the whole a disintegrating effect on the nation, and though most of the leaders of the Socialist movement hold leading places among the elite of the Bulgarian intelligentsia, they were too far removed above

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the level of the mass of their supporters to make themselves understood. They rather chose to leave the task of guiding their partisans to the more demagogically inclined among them, who excelled in the art of invective, and abuse [1] while they themselves reserved their exertions for parliamentary work. In this their activity was both commendable and fruitful, and their criticisms mostly opportune, and helped to raise the general level of the debates in the Sobranye. Sakuzov and his colleagues, Dr. Djidrov, Assen Tsankov, and Yannulov have equally distinguished themselves in the literary field, especially Dr. Djidrov who is the editor of one of the leading Bulgarian reviews on economics. Other prominent adherents of the party were Pastuhov and Kazazov, the latter having played a prominent part in the coup d'état of June 9, 1923 and having since persistently worked for a rapprochement between his country and Yugoslavia, owing to which he has now been fittingly appointed Bulgarian Minister at Belgrade. Long before the suppression of the parliamentary regime in Bulgaria, dislocation set in among the ranks of the Socialists and its most prominent members seceded from the party, which was weakened to such an extent that it practically ceased to exert any influence on politics. Already in 1903, a cleavage had taken place in the party and the more doctrinaire partisans seceded to form the group of the so-called „Narrow" socialists under Blagoev, and who gradually merged themselves with the communists. Their influence from every point

[1] This explains how campaigns of slander and diffamation against political opponents who were on the whole respectable, were often indulged in by the Socialist party, though they often ended to the clear injury of the initiators. The most resounding one, was the electoral campaign against Prof. P. Stoyanov, a radical candidate, when the Socialists did not hesitate to publish on the eve of the election a forged letter purporting to be his, giving him no time to dispel the imputations levelled at him.

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of view was disastrous, for instead of lending their support to the more progressive elements in the country, they sided with the most disreputable, in order to enhance disorder and dissatisfaction and thereby hasten the advent of the proletarian revolution.

"The worse, the better for us", seemed to have been their motto. The impact of these advanced doctrines on half-cultured and uncritical minds has been most detrimental to the latter. They consider themselves as outright enemies of the community within which they live and they work for its destruction instead of for its advancement, and this forces the authorities to deal drastically with these fanatics. Their ranks were swollen by a large proportion of the teaching profession and of the lower grades of public functionaries. In the revolutionary outbreak of September 1923, over 1000 teachers joined the revolutionary bands. M. D. Kazazov, who for a short time acted as Minister of Railways, declared in the Sobranye on February 27, 1925 that prior to the revolutionary outbreak of September 1923, the railways and the telegraphs were in complete control of the communist party and that some 700 functionaries had to be dismissed from these State departments owing to their fanaticism which rendered them unreliable. Many among the teachers, and even women teachers, are fanatical converts of communism. One often hears of teachers who forbid their pupils to read the works of the poet Vazov, as being too patriotic, or who make blasphemous discourses to the students. One should not feel surprised at the astounding spread of Communism in Bulgaria, because all idealistically minded young people have nothing else to turn to. The corruption, venality and debasement of the political parties repelled all but the most prosaic. The only other focus of attraction, the Radical party, abstained from all misleading propaganda, and instead of holding out the

lure of an early advent to power, openly prepared for a long peregrination in the wilderness, which was enough to benumb the enthusiasm of the less intrepid. The intensive propaganda carried on by the Russian Bolsheviki, the close relations existing between Bulgarian Communist leaders and their Russian colleagues[1], the similarity of the language, and the immense influence which Russian literature has exerted on the Bulgarian intelligentsia for generations, makes the Bulgarians the most promising adepts of Bolshevism. Except for a mere handful of the well-off, all the rest of the people are either fervently hoping for the advent of Bolshevism or indifferent to its coming. They are convinced that the present system has brought only disillusion; Bolshevism, even if it did not improve matters could hardly make them worse, and it would certainly bring in its wake a much needed relief, that o the emancipation of a third of the Bulgarian people from the intolerable foreign servitude it has been placed under. The existing 'Bourgeois' regime has no countervailing attraction to offer. Maladministration, crushing taxation, and exploitation, not only by the local pillars of the bourgeoisie, but also by the representatives of the Western States. French bondholders extort from the starving Bulgarian peasant five times more for what he owes them than they are permitted to exact from their own co-nationals. And this crying injustice is complacently looked upon by the League of Nations, which equally tolerates the persecution and victimisation of the Bulgarian minorities incorporated in the adjoining Balkan States, despite the Treaties which

[1] One of the moving spirits of the Russian revolution was the Bulgarian Rakovski. The Russian *Pravda* recently affirmed that there were over 600 Bulgarians occupying responsible posts in the Russian administration among whom may be cited, Stomaniakov, assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Telalov, adviser of the Soviet Minister in China, Peitchev and Petrunov, secretaries of the Soviet Legations in Paris and London etc.

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665 668 guarantee certain elementary human rights, the enjoyment of which the League of Nations has never attempted to secure for these minorities.

At the elections of 1931, in spite of the fact that the Communist party had been outlawed and the endless persecution it was exposed to, yet it succeeded in sending 12% of the deputies elected to the Sobranye camouflaged as working men.

The extreme wretchedness of the bulk of the nation and the mass of destitute refugees have created new foci for Communist proselytism, and the country is to-day literally honeycombed with Bolshevism which only awaits a favourable opportunity to break out. Until quite recently, Communism was openly professed to be the coming form of government, and both peasant families and bourgeois, hastened alike to enroll officially some of their members in this party in order to secure an eventual protector on its advent which was considered imminent.

FERDINAND AT THE HELM

661 648 Having with the support of the united Opposition got rid of the man who brough him to Bulgaria and who consolidated his throne, and having in turn made use of its services in order to reconcile himself with Russia, Ferdinand hastened to sow discord and suspicion among the members of the Stoilov Cabinet, so as to get rid of them now that with their help he had achieved his purpose. He thus intrigued against Gueshov, Madjarov and Stoilov, complaining alternatively to each of his other colleagues. using insinuations, slander and insult.[1]

In 1899 Grekov was entrusted with the formation of a new Ministry with the support of the Radoslavovists who far outnumbered his adherents. At the elections the Rado-

[1] Cf. V. T. Veltchev's: „Pages of our new political history".

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665 661 which no one could further trust. One of the leading Sofia newspapers, the *Mir*, wrote on May 12, 1934 :

> .In Bulgaria there is no longer any State authority. At the head of the State are puny uncultured people who destroy and are incapable of constructing. And all these petty personalities are asking for more offices, more ministerial porfolios, more public funds for their political friends. Our Government is not a democracy, but purely and simply an organisation of marauding bands. The patient and submissive citizen asks how long will this state of affairs last?

668 701 Against this canker of demoralisation the reserve officers, the only organised and patriotic force in the country, had several times protested and drawn the attention of the Government. They dispatched a deputation on January 18, 1933 to the Prime Minister recommending the adoption of certain measures which would curtail existing abuses. At the end of April 1933, they held a congress and they passed a resolution appealing to all men of goodwill to group themselves together and form a non-party government which might extricate the country from the bog in which it was wallowing. In another congress held at the end of 1933, they again insisted on the formation of a non-party Cabinet in order that the people might be saved from the prevailing demoralisalion which had set in among the political parties. These reminders however, had been disregarded.

When in May 1934, the Radical member of the Cabinet was so rudely unhorsed by his colleagues, it became apparent that the Mushanov Cabinet was at the end of its tether. There were only two political forces powerful enough to replace it. The Agrarians, and Tsankov's Democratic Entente. They were utterly hostile to one another and each intent on excluding its rival from all participation in office. The advent of either to power meant the outbreak of a civil war, more bitter than that which had been waged in 1925. To prevent this calamity, the

military decided much against their will to assume control of State affairs. This was done by the coup d'état of May 19, 1934, which met with the apparent approval of the bulk of the population, heartily sick of the disgusting squabbles of the political parties.

The military had warned in time the politicians that they should sink their quarrels and attend to the proper governing of the country; they had insisted on the necessity of the civilians combining to form a decent government, and seeing that their objurgations remained unheeded they had taken at last the task in their own hands. Even when they assumed power and in contrast with the politicians, they manifested no anxiety to fill the public offices with their adherents; they still appealed to certain civilians who enjoyed the reputation of being honest and capable men and entrusted them with responsible positions in the Government. The new Cabinet presided over by Kimon Gheorghiev had a distinctly civilian appearance, the military contented themselves with back seats, but they kept vigilant and alert and for once the rusty State machine began to function at a pace it had not experienced for years. In a manifesto to the people, drawn up in concise and blunt terms, the Government made known the reasons for which the army had decided to act, and exposed the programme it was intent on applying. The Government had learnt from the experiment of Tsankov that it was futile to seek the fusion of political parties in order to work with their support and by prescribed parliamentary methods; it therefore proceeded to dissolve both the Chamber and the political parties, declaring that the latter had outlived their usefulness. It made it known that it contemplated working out a scheme for the creation of a corporative Parliament in which all professions would be represented as well as certain political currents, but this was a matter for the future and in the meanwhile

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the Cabinet would govern by decrees. The Gheorghiev Cabinet fully justified the hopes placed in it. Never since its liberation did Bulgaria have such and efficient government; the reforms, improvements and innovations accomplished were most commendable and efficacious, and for this reason when its resignation was announced on January 22, 1935 the news caused deep disillusion and painful surprise to all those who had Bulgaria's well-being at heart.

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General Zlatev, the new Premier, was Minister of War in the Gheorghiev Cabinet; in a public speech delivered on February 24, 1935, while affirming that the programme of the Government remained identical with that proclaimed in the manifesto of May 19, he explained some of the reasons which had brought about his predecessor's resignation. According to him, his predecessors had somewhat swerved from the wishes of the army which had set them in power. Instead of prosecuting and suppressing indiscriminately all Macedonian organisations they had dissolved only the Michailovist wing (alleged to be subsidised by Italy) while the Protogerovist section (pro-Yugoslav) was allowed full liberty of action M. Kimon Gheorghiev was alleged to have sought inordinate powers for himself, wishing to wield an authority like that of Signor Mussolini! For this purpose he had demanded that certain prerogatives of the Crown should be curtailed These views had hurt the loyalist feelings of the army which was profoundly attached to Tsar Boris, and it had therefore decided on the Cabinet's reconstruction as a measure likely to cement the unity of the army which was threatened by the enunciation of such views. Those who know M. Kimon Gheorghiev and his colleagues, all of whom are distinguished by their extreme modesty have some difficulty in believing that either he, or any of his collaborators aspired or contemplated to don the mantle of a dictator. What they de-

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sired was to restrain such powers as the Crown possessed which had rendered its intervention often disastrous in the past, as had been the case for example on June 29, 1913[1]. It is with misgivings therefore that friends of Bulgaria have seen her drop these trusty pilots who have been quite gratuitously charged with fostering disunity in the army[2].

[1] The desire to abrogate such prerogatives of the Crown as that of disposing of all promotions and appointments in the army, and of nominating the war Minister, was a thoroughly democratic conception, for Tsar Ferdinand had largely abused of these privileges and had rendered the exercise of democracy illusory.

The breed of reptilian personalities which unfortunately abounds in Bulgaria and to which the consolidation af a regime, like that of K. Gheorghiev, spells disaster, has done its utmost to poison the mind of Tsar Boris against the promoters of such a liberal scheme, and especially against Colonel Damian Veltchev, to whose courage and abnegation he largely owes his maintenance on the throne, for it must not de forgotten that Colonel D. Veltchev was one of the chief organisers of the coup d'état of June 9, 1923 which averted the proclamation of a republic by Stambuliiski.

That the retention of such rights by the Crown is a dangerous weapon becomes obvious from the fact that in October 1935 some 80 capable officers were forcibly retired, for no other reason save that of being suspected of sympathising with Colonel D. Veltchev and his colleagues.

The breaking of the careers of so many promising young officers is not likely to promote the unity which Bulgarians are vainly striving to attain; on the contrary, such arbitrary measures are likely to gravely compromise the popularity which the Crown has hitherto enjoyed and nullify one of the few centripetal forces which so far have helped to bind the nation together.

[2] To all appearances the brief spell of decent government ushered in by M. K. Gheorghiev and his colleagues will remain a unique episode in Bulgarian history and future Bulgarian poets will probably celebrate its memory after the style of Byron's effusions on Miltiades:

> The tyrant of the Chersonese
> Was freedom's best and bravest friend
> That tyrant was Miltiades!
> Oh! that the present hour would lend
> Another despot of the kind!
> Such chains as his were sure to bind".

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•668 701 Unity and concord unhappily are not the distinguishing virtues of the Bulgarians, and they are not likely to be fostered by the elimination of such devoted and courageous men as M. Kimon Gheorghiev's colleagues from office. It was rumoured that Colonel Veltchev, the able supporter and adviser of the former Cabinet, aimed at dispensing with the monarchy, (this was a deliberate lie, for the new Constitution which was being prepared provided for its maintenance) that the older officers resented this and that with their aid Tsar Boris had been able to turn the tables, taking advantage of the unfavourable report of the Financial Committee of the League of Nations on the financial reforms of the Government. Whatever the intimate wishes of Colonel Damian Veltchev, former director of the military academy, and one of the most intelligent, chivalrous, and progressive officers in the Bulgarian army, it is certainly not he who can be accused of sowing disharmony in the ranks of the army. Some six years ago when he was forced to resign from his post, he published an open letter in which he made it clear that certain army circles were intent on doing away with him. This letter created a sensation. The Sofia Press at the time (October 1929) declared that:

„The facts exposed profoundly revolted the public. No one could have suspected that behind the curtains such disgusting and black intrigues could be carried on in Bulgaria, and that even if only a fourth of what had been divulged were true, the letter constituted a crushing condemnation for a community which could not guarantee security to its distinguished members".

When this document is recollected it would appear that the older officers reared in the school of Tsar Ferdinand and most of whom had not been asked to participate in the „coup d'état" of May 19, because of their participation in that of Prof. A. Tsankov had proved the undoing of his movement, resented the independence shown by their younger colleagues, and had engineered

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a cabal by which they succeeded in removing them from power. The principle of hierarchy and military discipline which had apparently been infringed on May 19, 1934 especially since this „coup" was carried out without considering the wishes of Tsar Boris, the supreme head of the army, was thus vindicated and restored. But whether unity will be promoted by such methods in the army remains to be seen. For there is another point of cleavage; Colonel Veltchev favoured a policy of reconciliation with Yugoslavia and was supported by the junior officers, as well as by the organisation of the non-commissioned officers of the reserve, while the older officers sided with General Vulkov, of rather sinister fame, former minister in the Tsankov Cabinet, and later minister in Rome, who is held to be a favourite of the Court and headed the pro-Italian wing of the army. The fact that he was dismissed from his post at Rome on the accession to power of the Gheorghiev Cabinet is indicative of the existing tension between the two groups into which the military are divided. Unity and harmony seem to be foreign to the mentality of the Bulgarians; there must always be some disunity and scission; as of old, the political parties were split into Russophiles and Austrophiles, so now there are slowly evolving pro-Italian and pro-Yugoslav currents into the vortex of which both the army and the Macedonian organisation are being steadily drawn.[1] These senior officers are, as may be expected, rather of too conservative tendencies, and one may, question the advisability for a little country like Bulgaria embaking on an intensely nationalistic educational programme as had been decided upon at this belated hour. The utility of such methods is disputable even for large States like Germany; but for small

[1] It is fortunate indeed for Bulgaria that at the time of writing Italy and Yugoslavia seem to be composing their senseless quarrel so that they will cease fomenting disunity in Bulgaria.

668 countries like Bulgaria the adoption of such an outgrown policy may prove suicidal. Dictatorship aims at achieving unity and submission by appealing not to reason, but to sentiment, hence the praise of nationality and the fostering of patriotism which is one of the most powerful sentiments. But the Bulgarians are an unemotional folk, and the attempt to play on their feelings will probably miscarry. They can only be won over by more positive performances and the certainty of an impending improvement of their lot, which at this time of crisis is altogether a more complicated and difficult task, which may well strain beyond measure any dictatorship. It is admissible that every dictatorship which wishes to perpetuate itself is confronted with the problem of remoulding the mentality of its subject population and adjusting it to the regime under which it is to live. If it can not turn out men fit for its purposes, confiding in its ideals, approving in its methods, and capable of responding enthusiastically to its exhortations, it will collapse for lack of men willing and apt to work under it. But such men have to be *grown* and they need a special environment in which they can be carefully nurtured. It is not by such antidotes that the all pervading Bolshevik virus will be combated. Those who believe that Bulgaria, being a country of smallholders, has nothing to fear from communism are ignorant of the profound transformation which has lately happened. One of the most serious Sofia newspapers, the *Mir*, was writing as follows on August 24, 1933:

„Is it not true that 30% of our people is clearly bolshevised and that a large part of the remainder has no faith and no guiding principles and does not know how to think and how to act?

At the municipal elections held in Sofia in September 1932 out of a total poll of 47,823; 16,000 votes were recorded in favour of the Communists who remain in spite of all the persecution they have been subjected to, the

only disciplined force outside the army. And the communist conspiracies and cells which are almost daily discovered among all layers of Bulgarian society, are convincing proofs that communism is a theory which exerts an irresistible attraction for this long suffering people. An effective antidote to this doctrine is not conservatism, but an enlightened liberal policy which would release the community from the restrictive legacies and entanglements of the past. Such a forward looking policy was the one inspiring the colleagues of Kimon Gheorghiev who constituted a group of public-minded men, courageous enough to break with tradition, and capable of creating common interests with Bulgaria's western neighbour to replace the separate interests which had hitherto divided the two States. They tried to release Bulgaria from the crippling tradition of national sovereignty, from the economic exploitation of her parasitic industrialists and from the strangulation of her crushing and inelastic debts. Vested interests, local and foreign, leagued themselves to plot their overthrow. But Bulgaria is at the cross-roads, the path which she has just engaged herself in leads backwards to the past. A living society cannot afford to live on the past, it has to face new situations, it must evolve new ways of thinking, forge new instruments for new struggles, it has to adapt itself to new circumstances otherwise it is apt to go under. If Bulgaria wishes to go forward and ahead she must retrieve her steps and stride along the road indicated by Kimon Gheorghiev and his colleagues, or choose the only alternative course, the broad avenue leading to Bolshevism.

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Since the above was written owing to the lack of unity among the officer corps, their attempt at reform missed fire. General Zlatev, having resorted to the high-handed measure of arresting Colonel K. Gheorghiev and

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[For a discussion of Bulgarian political activities in Macedónia in 1911, and Serb-Bulgar relations concerning the Macedonian question, see E16 Slavic Peoples, 1: Niederle, category 116, pp. 131-134]